



MCESA

Maricopa County Education Service Agency

NEWS RELEASE

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SUMMER READING PROGRAM IN FULL SWING
READING FOR THE STARS IMPROVES READING COMPREHENSION

Phoenix (July 2, 2012) - Students in four schools throughout Maricopa County are devoting part of their summer to reading. They even get to keep each book they read. Students at Desert Spirit Elementary, Indian Bend Elementary, San Marcos Elementary, and Magnet Traditional School are taking part in *Reading for the Stars Home Connection*. The Maricopa County Education Service Agency (MCESA) program focuses on improving reading comprehension skills in third to sixth grade students from high-needs schools.

The Tohono O'odham Nation provided funding for the summer program, designed to offset the summer reading loss experienced by many students. Some students have a limited selection of books to read and limited access to libraries or computers to improve their reading proficiency outside of school. For many families, books are considered a luxury, and parents may not have the time or knowledge to support their child's literacy development. Reading for the Stars Home Connection can help. After reading the book, parents or guardians check their child's understanding by verifying the child's response to questions on a post card, which gets returned to the school. This triggers the next book to be sent. Through the program, students receive up to eight books delivered to their home or school, matched to their interest and reading level.

"We are grateful that the Tohono O'odham Nation has funded this important program," said Dr. Don Covey, Maricopa County Superintendent of Schools. "With the state's new academic standards in English Language Arts, it is imperative for students to continue their reading practice and comprehension so they don't fall behind."

Reading for the Stars Home Connection is an important tool to support students in their quest to succeed in school and be college-and career-ready.

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The Maricopa County Education Service Agency and its staff of expert practitioners and service-oriented professionals are dedicated to ensuring that the more than 700,000 school-age children in the county graduate college- and career-ready by building alliance partnerships to provide leadership, services and programs in the areas of Executive Leadership, Educational Innovation, and Economic Management. Under the direction of the Maricopa County Superintendent of Schools, the agency is also statutorily responsible for approximately 160 mandates related to education in Maricopa County, the state's most populous county and home to 63 percent of all school-age children in Arizona.